



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

Mailing Address: PO Box 94649 Seattle WA 98124-4649
Street Address: 700 5th Ave Suite 1700

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 110/11

Name and Address of Property: **Chamber of Commerce Building**
215 Columbia Street

Legal Description: Lots 2 and 3, Block 6, Town of Seattle, as laid out on the claims of C.D. Boren and A.A. Denny (commonly known as Boren & Denny's Addition to the City of Seattle), according to the plat thereof recorded in Volume 1 of Plats, page 27, in King County, Washington;

Together with the northeasterly one-half of the vacated alley in said block adjoining said lots;

Except the northeasterly 9 feet of said lots condemned in King County Superior Court Cause No. 54135 for the widening of Third Avenue in accordance with Ordinance No. 14345 of the City of Seattle.

At the public meeting held on March 2, 2011 the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the Chamber of Commerce Building at 215 Columbia Street as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25.12.350:

- C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, City, state, or nation; and*
- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction; and*
- E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder.*

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Site, Setting and Urban Context

The Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Third Avenue and Columbia Street, on a site that slopes steeply to the west along Columbia Street. The building occupies the entire northeast quarter of the block and is particularly visible from westerly downhill and easterly uphill viewpoints along Columbia Street. The principal façade is oriented north toward Columbia Street; it dominates viewpoints along that street, which

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drops steeply to the west. Modern multi-story bank buildings are located directly across the street at both Third Avenue and Columbia Street. The distinctive Central Building (1907) is located at the opposite northeast corner of the intersection. The 14-story Dexter Horton Building (1921-24) abuts the Chamber of Commerce Building to the south; it occupies the entire southern half block along Cherry Street between Third and Second Avenues. A two-story former bank building (Seattle National Bank, 1921), now owned and used by United Way, is located on the remaining northwest quarter of the block. A dead-end alley runs between the subject building and the United Way Building.

Due to the adjacent low scale building and the upward sloping grade along Columbia Street, the upper floor levels of the west elevation of the Chamber of Commerce Building are visible from viewpoints along Second Avenue at Columbia Street. Due to its relatively modest scale in comparison to the adjacent and nearby multi-story bank buildings and its unique architectural character, the Chamber of Commerce building contrasts with its surroundings and is a highly distinctive component of the streetscape and the nearby urban environment.

The Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building was designed and constructed in 1923-1924 and is a particularly unique commercial building, it exhibits exquisite exterior features drawn from Italian Romanesque designs, specifically 12th century churches located in the Piedmont/Lombardy region. The most distinctive four-story portion of the building is evocative of a basilica church façade; it is located mid-block and oriented toward Columbia Street. The four-story wing is juxtaposed and unified with the more conventional three-story commercial block wing located at the corner of Third Avenue and Columbia Street. Both portions of the building are overlaid with and exquisitely unified by Lombardic derived architectural ornament and detailing.

Current Exterior Appearance

The building has a steel and reinforced concrete structural system and measures 111' x 120' with the greater frontage running along Third Avenue. The two principal exterior elevations are clad with cast stone that was originally fabricated by the Olympian Stone Company in thirteen subtly differentiated hues that range from buff with pink highlights to buff with light blue, violet and/or orange-yellow highlights. These varied hues and the slightly grooved texture of the cast stone give each panel the appearance of hand-cut stone; they were fabricated to be reminiscent of medieval construction and traditional stonework often obtained from different quarries.

Columbia Street Entrance Façade

This building is unique to Seattle architecture primarily due to the façade that is oriented toward Columbia Street, which was specifically designed to be evocative of a basilica church façade. The design of the façade highlights what was the principal recessed portal entryway into the offices of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce. This entrance pavilion exhibits particularly rich and exquisitely detailed ornament and decoration derived from early Christian and medieval architectural motifs. The prominent two-story central entry portal is flanked by ornate horizontal art panels that depict native and modern industries in Washington State presented as a modern adaptation of the Romanesque sculpture. Each of the panels is composed of eight separate sections, which appear to have been executed in roughly textured rustic cast stone. The panels are harmoniously integrated into the overall design scheme of the façade; the figures are set within and enframed by exquisitely detailed Romanesque blind arcades.

The entrance pavilion is adorned by compound columns and arches that are carved with highly ornamental motifs including twisted fluting known as Salomonic columns named after those at

the Temple of Solomon. The compound arches within the recessed portal also include incised columns and arches decorated with vine and other geometric patterns that are indicative of Celtic motifs used in early Christian art as well as Muslim and Arabic design precedents that influenced Spanish and Romanesque architecture. The entry arch is further accentuated by carved/decorated voussoirs set in a staggered pattern, mostly decorated with Celtic motifs and carved lions accentuate the impost. A granite bulkhead runs along the base of the façade and at the base of the compound arch at the entryway. At the west end of the bulkhead the granite is incised with “MCMXXIV” (1924).

The pedimented façade is divided into three parts enframed by pilasters; a central bay is flanked by slightly-recessed blind arched bays to each side. The façade is capped by rake trim with gable end returns. A Lombardic-inspired frieze runs above a decorative blind arcaded corbel table. The sculpted frieze includes exquisitely sculpted terra cotta panels that depict animals indigenous to Washington State, including bears, mountain lions, pelicans, wild horses and mountain goats. The corbel table is decorated with foliage patterns that extend and further decorate the fluted pilaster caps. The central entry bay of the façade is further distinguished by a group of three arched windows that are located above a raised frieze panel depicting ornate Romanesque arches within a blind arcade. A slightly-recessed blind arch extends from this arched window/frieze element and echoes the portal opening below. A central rosette window is located within the central blind arch. A single arched window opening is located within each of the side bays. The blind arch elements are accentuated by voussoirs and imposts. The blind arcade elements at the northwest corner of the façade correspond with similar detailing at the cornice of the commercial block portion of the building to the east.

Within the two-story entry vestibule at the face of the entry door assembly is a dramatic ornamental design feature; a highly decorative wrought iron screen (backed by pink/red marble or travertine) surrounds the doorway and arched window above it. The rosette window pattern and the blind arcade motifs are incorporated and repeated within the screen. The window element is composed of a tall, rectangular, multi-pane panel surmounted by an arched multi-pane window. These window panels appear to be replacements that closely match the original design. The original entry doors have been replaced by modern bronze entry doors. Originally the screen incorporated embossed bronze signage on two separate horizontal panels identifying the owner/tenant “Seattle – Chamber of Commerce.” The upper panel of this signage “Seattle” remains in place. The entry vestibule also retains two original and highly ornamental lanterns that are mounted on each side wall.

Commercial Block Façades

The three-story portion of the building exhibits a more conventional two-part commercial block façade composition with a flat roof. The north (Columbia Street) elevation is divided into three bays distinguished by sets of windows at each of the two upper floor levels. The east (Third Avenue) elevation is divided into seven bays with the same upper floor level fenestration pattern. The Romanesque Revival design mode is conveyed at both elevations by the inclusion of round-arched window openings at the uppermost floor level, ornate recessed spandrels decorated with blind-arcade panels and a distinctive Lombardic-inspired corbel table and simple cornice at the parapet. The arched windows are accentuated – like those directly above the entrance vestibule – with cast stone trim and ornate imposts. Both elevations were originally distinguished at the storefront level by wide segmental arched storefront openings with multi-paned mezzanine level windows. These distinctive openings have been remodeled and rebuilt to include round arched openings and modern storefront window/door assemblies. Due to the steep grade at Columbia

Street, two storefront bays are located at the basement/areaway level; they are accessible by a stairwell with original pipe rail guardrails.

East (Alley) Elevation

The west (alley) elevation is mostly utilitarian in character. This elevation is divided into seven structural bays. The distinctive cast stone cladding, typical cast stone detailing and the decorative blind-arched corbel table extend one bay length in at the north end of this elevation. The remainder of the concrete wall is finished with painted concrete plaster or stucco. There are six, evenly spaced, window openings at the upper floor level; they are unframed, individually set and have arched heads. These large openings exhibit modern window assemblies of fixed central panels and sidelights surmounted by fan-light units, similar in configuration to the original multi-pane sash members. The other windows at this elevation are primarily modern fixed and double-hung with modern insulated glass. A skybridge (construction, n.d.) is located at the second floor level within the third bay to the south; it extends across the alley and connects with the adjacent building to the west. Windows at the alley level appear to be non-historic steel sash with wire-glass glazing and are mostly set in original single unframed openings. Modern hollow metal doors have been installed at original door openings.

Non-Historic Exterior Alterations

As noted above, extensive storefront level alterations were made to the three-story commercial block portion of the building. In the process of changing the openings and reconstructing the storefronts, new cast stone panels were introduced; the color of the new panels does not actually match the original materials. In additions to these alterations, all of the original wooden, multi-pane double-hung windows and original multi-pane arched window sash at the principal elevations appears to have been replaced by modern insulated fixed-glass window units. As noted above, the original entrance doors at Columbia Street and a portion of the original sign have been removed and replaced.

Significant Interior Features and/or Finishes

The building was designed to house the offices and facilities of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce and related civic and commercial organizations as well as to provide retail and other commercial space. The interior design originally included formal entrance lobbies, meeting and dining facilities and a banquet hall. The entire interior of the building has been repeatedly remodeled and there are no significant interior finishes, features, or public spaces worthy of consideration for historic preservation purposes.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building is directly associated with the period between 1920 and 1930 when a significant number of major downtown commercial buildings were constructed and the downtown commercial district was fully established. The economic prosperity of the 1920s stimulated the development of high-rise commercial buildings, as well as smaller-scale bank and specialty retail stores, major hotels including apartment hotels, club buildings and entertainment facilities, typically designed by leading local architects. The northward expansion of commercial development and the related increase in real estate values lead to the destruction of the original residential district, as it was gradually absorbed by commercial and other real estate development. By 1930, virtually all of the old residential district properties - as well as

many of the immediate post-fire era commercial buildings located outside of Pioneer Square - had been demolished or removed.

The Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building is a highly unusual historic property not only due to its original ownership and use, but for its exquisite Romanesque Revival stylistic features. It is an exceptional example of the work of a highly regarded Seattle architect, Harlan Thomas in association with the noteworthy firm of Schack, Young and Myers. The Seattle Chamber of Commerce Building is also architecturally distinctive for the integration of sculpted art panels created by artist Morgan C. Padelford with assistance of Miss Mildred Stumer. Despite extensive interior alterations and storefront level reconstruction work, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce building remains generally intact and well preserved and is a particularly unique downtown commercial business block.

Seattle Chamber of Commerce – Organization History

The history of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce is very closely tied to various local historic events and the overall commercial and industrial development of the City of Seattle and the region. The organization was founded in 1882 when Seattle's population was roughly 3,500. The specific circumstances that spurred its founding occurred after a Seattle entrepreneur obtained a lucrative \$12,000 federal contract for shipping mail bound for Alaska on a monthly basis. Prior to this time, such mail service had been routed through either Portland or San Francisco. Unhappy with this shift, individuals associated with those ports mounted an effort to have the contract revoked. Thus, twenty-three Seattle businessmen met to create an organization that could lobby the postmaster-general and the Washington territorial delegate to Congress on his behalf.

Numerous important figures in Seattle history and commercial development were in attendance at the initial meeting, including: Henry L. Yesler; John Leary; Angus Mackintosh; James Campbell; John J. Post; Corliss P. Stone; Samuel C. Woodruff; W.A. Jennings; Samuel Frauenthal; Thomas Burke; W. H. Taylor; J.C. Haines; Bailey Gatzert, H.B. Bagley; John Collins; H.G. Stuve; and F.W. Wusthoff. Thomas W. Prousch was also an early member of the organization.

The purpose of the organization was essentially to promote Seattle's commercial and economic interests and undertake activities in support local and regional commerce; thus, the organization played a crucial role at various points in Seattle's economic growth, physical development and social history. The organization was instrumental in representing the needs and interests of the city and the region. They waged winning and losing battles during periods of economic prosperity, as well as economic panic and depression, caused controversies and also instilled civic cooperation.

In the mid-1880s the organization began to actively work to obtain an intercontinental railway terminus at Seattle. After several years they were successful in their lobbying efforts, when in 1893 James J. Hill was induced to make Seattle the western terminus of the Great Northern Railway. The organization played a calming role during the anti-Chinese riots of 1886 and when railway labor strikes occurred in the early 1890s. On August 30, 1897 the Seattle Chamber of Commerce established a Bureau of Information in order to promote Seattle as the gateway to the Klondike and to counter similar efforts by other West Coast cities. The Chamber advocated for the establishment of Fort Lawton and related coastal defense facilities in the region, as well as the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard. They played a role in promoting the construction of a new Federal

Post Office building at Third and Union in 1902 and in the improvement of local and regional mail service during the era. During this period they were particularly active in lobbying for the construction of improved wharf and shipping facilities. After the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce organized a charitable response – an emergency relief bureau - involving the collection and distribution of shiploads of provisions for those in need; they worked directly with the Seattle YWCA to implement this effort.

The Chamber played a major role in the organization and promotion of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. The exposition headquarters was initially housed within the offices of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce, which were then located in the Lowman Building. The AYP ultimately drew some 3,750,000 visitors – many of whom remained in Seattle or returned home and then subsequently settled in the Seattle area. By 1909 the organization had nine salaried employees and published a regular monthly magazine and bulletin, *The Pacific Northwest Commerce*. Each member of the organization received a free copy of this official organ and 2,000 copies were printed in July 1909.

By 1915, the Chamber had established formal trade relation commissions with both Japan and China. Among the large public projects that the Chamber championed were the construction of the Lake Washington Ship Canal, the establishment of the Sand Point Naval Air Station, the first paved cross-state highway and the construction of the first Lake Washington floating bridge. During WWII, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce focused on labor and housing shortages, federal controls and traffic congestion issues. They also organized the Industrial Development Council of Seattle and King County and championed the construction of the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in 1949. In 1956, as the post-war tourist industry took off, the Chamber opened the first local Convention and Tourist Bureau offices. By 1957 – upon its 75th anniversary - the Chamber possessed more than 4,000 members and employed 50 staff members.

Initially meetings of the organization were held at the offices of various members. Their first permanent offices were established in 1884 in a former city hall building located on Second Avenue South. They subsequently moved into the Yesler-Leary Building, then a very prominent commercial building and operated offices there from 1885 until 1888. After the fire of 1889, the Chamber of Commerce played a critical role in the reconstruction efforts. More extensive quarters were required so they rented the entire Stacy Mansion, located at Third and Marion for \$350 a month. The mansion then became known as the Chamber of Commerce Building, which they used until 1893. During the economic depression after the panic of 1893, they relocated to the Pacific Block (Seattle National Bank/Interurban building) remaining there until 1897. Between 1897 and 1889, the offices were housed in the Collins Building at Second Avenue and Cherry Street. They spent a few months with offices in the Burke Building in 1898 and then moved to the Haller Building until 1905, when they relocated to the Lowman Building.

By 1909, the organization was finally comfortably settled in offices housed in a 7,500 sq. ft. leased space on the eighth floor level of the newly constructed Central Building. Increasingly, the organization received inquiries - reported to be in the thousands - regarding the location of new industries, manufacturers and business undertakings in the city and region. The spacious offices included an assembly hall for general meetings. The organization also began to publish a regular monthly magazine devoted exclusively to the commercial interests of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. It was modeled on similar publications distributed by influential commercial organizations around the world. The July 1909 issue of *Pacific Northwest Commerce* noted the essential purpose of the magazine:

“During this year, when all the resources, products and manufacturers of the State of Washington are on display at the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, it will strive to further the purpose of the Chamber to broaden the ‘made-in-Seattle’ idea...”

The July 1909 issue of *Pacific Northwest Commerce* also recounted the history of the organization and noted the members’ greatest hope:

“Regret has frequently been expressed that the Chamber of Commerce has never taken steps to acquire a home of its own, as so many commercial organizations in other large cities are owners of handsome structures that stand as evidences of the work accomplished. But the truth is that in the course of its existence, the Seattle Chamber has found so many other pressing needs that the body unselfishly gave way to its own that these others might be furthered. There still exists a strong hope among members that it will one day be permanently housed in a building of its own.”

By 1924, the organization had indeed outgrown its tenant space in the Central Building and embarked on the construction of a “home of its own” - a new building - that the organization believed would be the “embodiment of the Seattle spirit, a highly useful monument to civic progress and a realization of the dreams of the city’s courageous pioneers.”

Chamber of Commerce Building - History

The Chamber of Commerce Building was constructed on a nearby site, kitty-corner to southwest of the Central Building; the land had been leased to the Chamber for a period of fifty years with an option to purchase. The project received a significant amount of publicity and news coverage in the local press and the Chamber’s own magazine, by then titled *Seattle’s Business*. The highly distinctive cast stone building was designed by Harlan Thomas in partnership with the architectural firm of Schack, Young and Myers. It is not known how the architectural selection was made; however, Harlan Thomas, James Schack and David Myers were all well established and highly regarded local architects and A.M. Young was a particularly skilled structural engineer. David Myers and Harlan Thomas had previously collaborated on the design of the College Club (1921, destroyed).

The building was constructed according to architectural drawings dated May 20, 1924 and the building permit appears to have been issued on June 30, 1924. Like many other downtown commercial buildings, it was designed with a structural system that could accommodate an additional floor level at a future date. It was rapidly constructed by general contractors Rounds-Clist Co. at a cost of \$275,000. Construction began in late June 1924, after a 3 ½ month period, by mid-October the steel and reinforced concrete structure had been completed and a formal cornerstone laying ceremony was conducted. The festive event was attended by several hundred people including representatives from “practically every civic organization” in the city as well as those representing commercial organizations around the region and state. Among those who spoke was Judge Thomas Burke; by then Burke was the only surviving member of the founding group. By mid-January 1925, the building was close to completion and the organization had moved in. The building was formally dedicated on February 1, 1925, again with great festivity and pride.

The building exhibited unique architectural character due to its Italian Romanesque-inspired exterior treatment at the north elevation and the elaborate Columbia Street entrance pavilion and drew a great deal of public notice and notoriety. Harlan Thomas is credited with its design; he is known to have lived and traveled extensively in Europe and to have been particularly enamored

with Italian Romanesque architecture. Beginning in April 1924, a rendering of the building design was repeatedly published in local newspapers and Chamber publications, emphasizing the dramatic view uphill from the northwest and the ornate entrance pavilion façade. Harlan Thomas was a skilled artist and watercolorist and while the drawing is unsigned it certainly appears to be his work. The original architectural drawings include a detailed elevation of the entrance pavilion façade showing the architectural elements and details as constructed. The ornate corbel table and gable-end frieze are fully delineated; however, the sculpted art panels that flank the entrance pavilion are not shown. An area for each of the panels is loosely indicated and the published rendering also indicated a schematic horizontal art panel at both locations. The art panels appear to have not been installed until after the building was completed and occupied, as they were executed by independent artists who most certainly worked under the direction of Harlan Thomas.

The two distinctly modern art panels or sculpted plaques were placed at the entrance pavilion sometime during the spring of 1925. The plaque to the left (east) side represents primitive or Native American industries of fishing, woodcraft, grinding, weaving and hunting and depicts six molded human figures with related tools and instruments. The plaque to the right (west) side represents modern industries including farming, lumbering, mining, commerce, fishing and manufacturing and depicts six human figures bearing instruments and tools indicative of these industries. The plaques were designed by Morgan C. Padelford and sculpted by Mr. Padelford and Miss Mildred Stumer, both young Seattle artists and students at the University of Washington. Miss Stumer executed the panel commemorating modern industry and Mr. Padelford sculpted the panel depicting native industries.

In addition to housing the offices of the Chamber of Commerce and associated commercial groups, the building was designed to include seven storefront spaces with a barber shop and a newsstand located at the Columbia Street areaway level. The remainder of the entire building was used essentially for Chamber of Commerce purposes. As of January 1, 1925 chamber membership was 3,151 and it was hoped that the new building would arouse increased membership and further the goals of the organization.

At the main Columbia Street entrance lobby level the Chamber originally operated an information bureau office, a telegraph office and shoe polishing stand. The main Chamber of Commerce Board Room, offices and conference rooms were also at this level. The Seattle Real Estate Board, Seattle Real Estate and Multiple Listing Bureau and the Merchant's Exchange were also housed off the main lobby entrance. The Seattle Chapter of the American Association of Engineers also had offices at this level. Two elevators provided service to the upper three floor levels.

A large assembly hall was located at the second floor level, which is the same floor level as the Third Avenue storefront level. A large portion of third floor level was used as an exhibition space for the promotion of Northwest products. The Chamber organization occupied offices adjacent to the assembly hall and exhibit spaces on a mezzanine level above the assembly hall space. These upper floor level office spaces included several committee rooms and offices for specific organization departments, including: membership, accounting, publicity, information, state development, retail trade, foreign trade, transportation, and Alaska. The upper floor levels also housed a library, file room, stenographer rooms and telephone switchboard facilities.

The fourth floor level, which would be the same as the third floor level above the storefronts on Third Avenue, was used entirely for entertainment and recreation purposes. The public spaces at this level included a spacious dining room and banquet hall with a high vaulted ceiling and arched windows with westerly views toward Puget Sound. The banquet hall was served by a modern kitchen and could accommodate over 700 people. This space could also be separated by rolling shutters to create five private dining rooms. This floor level also included a large club room and lounge for use by Chamber members and their guests. It was intended that the banquet facility would be made available for rental by other clubs and groups for special events.

In March 1927 the Seattle Bond & Stock Exchange, which had been established in January 1926, moved to quarters on the Merchant's Exchange floor of the building. This local investment trading enterprise remained a tenant until it relocated to the newly completed United Exchange Building (Exchange Building, 1929-1930), shortly before both the exchange and the United Exchange Building went into default.

In January of 1928, the Chamber of Commerce appears to have purchased the property, which they had leased since 1924. By the mid-1950s storefront portions of the building began to be remodeled and modernized, possibly around the time that the original entrance lobby space was first updated and modernized in 1956. During this era the auditorium/assembly space and the dining facilities were considered to be too small for the larger chamber gatherings, so the organization began to regularly use the Olympic Hotel. Subsequently, after the 1962 Seattle World' Fair, they began to regularly use facilities at the Seattle Center.

In 1970, after surveying its membership the Chamber of Commerce made the decision to remain in the building for ten to fifteen more years. However, they began to occupy only the third floor and a portion of the entry lobby level. After 1969, The Richardson Associates (later known as TRA) became the buildings major tenant as they established architectural offices in portions of the first and second floor levels and took up the entire fourth floor level. The Richardson Associates was the successor firm to Schack, Young and Myers; founding partner A.M. Young entered into partnership with Stephen H. Richardson in c.1933. A. M. Young had served as the structural engineer for the original building design. TRA undertook a major remodeling and renovation project including the cleaning of the exterior, renovation of interior lobby space and elevators, some window replacement, and electrical and mechanical upgrades. This project also involved the introduction of the current non-historic round arched storefront openings. This project apparently included the removal of most of the original cast stone cladding at the storefront level as well as the old deteriorated segmental arched mezzanine windows and storefront assemblies. The original formula for the fabrication of the cast stone with its variegated integral color had been lost; however, the designers went to great efforts to have new cast stone panels prefabricated to match the original cast stone.

In 1983, the Chamber of Commerce vacated the building and moved to One Union Square and TRA purchased the building for its own use. The building was once again remodeled and upgraded in order to better accommodate its 200 employees. Work included new interior floor and wall finishes and the installation of suspended ceiling systems and major electrical and mechanical upgrades. TRA occupied the building for nearly 30 years until 1997, when company operations were ceased by its then parent company, Black & Veatch. The current owner and major tenant, Pacific Northwest Title also undertook a major multi-million dollar interior renovation after they acquired the building in 1997. The former banquet room was reconfigured to accommodate office space, structural upgrades were made, fire alarm/sprinkler systems

installed, mechanical and elevator improvements undertaken and a gazebo and rooftop garden were constructed. For a period in the late 1990s, space was leased to an innovative startup internet company, Amazon.com.

Harlan Thomas

Harlan Thomas (1870-1953) was born in Iowa and raised there and in Denver, Colorado after his family migrated west in 1879. He possessed an early interest in drawing and mechanics. Thomas obtained some experience as a carpenter prior to becoming a draftsman in a Denver architecture firm and then attending Colorado State College. He earned a B.S. degree with a major in mathematics and mechanics in 1895 and established his own architecture practice in Denver. Prior to migrating further west to Seattle in 1906, Thomas had already visited Western Europe for a sixteen month period that included architectural studies in Paris at an American atelier. During 1903 and 1904 he also took a fifteen month, round-the-world tour focused on further architectural study, sketching and painting.

Shortly after his arrival in Seattle, he designed two highly distinctive major projects: the Chelsea Hotel (1907) on the southwest slope of Queen Anne Hill and the Sorrento Hotel (1907) on First Hill. He also won several commissions for the design of school buildings in the region. The bulk of his subsequent commissions were often undertaken in partnership or collaboration with other architects including: Russell & Rice, Clyde Grainger and his own son Donald P. Thomas. He is credited with the design of several of Seattle's most distinctive buildings, including: Corner Market Building (1911-12, in partnership with Clyde Grainger); the Queen Anne, Columbia and Douglas Truth Libraries (1912-13, with Marbury Somerville); the Arcade Building/Rhodes Department Store (1926-27, destroyed) and the original portion of Harborview Hospital (with Grainger & Thomas, 1929-31). He also designed of the Delta Kappa Epsilon Fraternity House (Tau Kappa Epsilon, 1914) and Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority House (1930), as well as his own Mediterranean style family home on Queen Anne Hill.

Harlan Thomas is known to have continued to travel, sketch and paint throughout his career. It is believed that the design of the Chamber of Commerce Building was inspired by twelfth century churches he observed in Lombardy – Parma, Verona, and Pavia during his travels in Europe shortly before undertaking the project. Thomas was active in the AIA and served as the chapter president from 1924-26; he was elected an AIA Fellow in 1928. He is also held in high regard for his role as an educator at the University of Washington - School of Architecture, where he served as a professor of architecture and as the department head from 1926 until 1940. He became a recognized painter participating in exhibitions, especially after his retirement in 1949. Thomas is considered to have been one of Seattle's most urbane, versatile and influential architects. His worldly background, Beaux-Arts training and true artistic skill are demonstrated in his ability to create composite stylist treatments for distinctive modern buildings.

Schack, Young and Myers

Schack, Young and Myers were a particularly prolific local architecture firm and are credited with the design of numerous commercial, residential and institutional projects constructed during the 1920s. James Hansen Schack (1871-1933) arrived in Seattle in 1901 and initially practiced with Daniel R. Huntington designing the (only partially completed) Melhorn Building (1904); the First Methodist Episcopal Church (First United Methodist Church, 1907-10) and the original Arctic Club Building (Morrison Hotel, 1908-09). David John Myers (1872-1936) settled in Seattle after the fire of 1889 and worked in succession for Parkinson & Evers, John Parkinson, and Evers & Keith until 1894. After studying architecture in Boston he returned to Seattle in

1905 and established an active partnership with John Graham Sr. He then worked with Virgil Bogue in 1911-12 on the ill-fated *Plan of Seattle* and is believed to have generated many of the architectural plans and drawings included in the plan. He also served on the University of Washington - School of Architecture faculty from 1917-1920, as did Harlan Thomas. Arrigo M. Young (1884-1954) was a trained structural engineer. After working in Chicago and St. Louis, he migrated to Seattle in 1910 where he initially worked for the Moran Company. By 1913, he had established his own consulting firm; he then served as the structural engineer for various projects including theaters designed by Marcus Priteca.

Schack and Myers began sharing office space in 1917 and the full partnership with Young was founded in 1920. Shortly after the partnership was formed, Myers and Thomas collaborated on the design of the College Club (1921, destroyed), both of whom were members. The role of the larger firm on both the College Club and Chamber of Commerce Building projects appears to have been for engineering purposes, with Thomas serving as the principal architect and designer. Most designs credited to Schack, Young & Myers are in academic eclectic styles. The partnership lasted until 1929 when Myers returned to private practice. Schack and Young continued in partnership until Schack's death in 1933. By this time A.M. Young had obtained an architectural license; he then continued in partnership with Stephen H. Richardson and formed the firm of Young, Richardson, Carlton & Detlie, which later became known as The Richardson Associates and TRA. After 1969, TRA was a major tenant in the Chamber of Commerce Building and the firm was responsible for several subsequent remodeling projects affecting the interior and exterior of the building.

Morgan C. Padelford

Morgan C. Padelford (1902-1994) is credited with the design of the distinctive sculpted modern art panels at the entrance pavilion. The plaques were sculpted by Morgan C. Padelford and Miss Mildred Stumer, both young Seattle artists and students at the University of Washington. Miss Stumer executed the panel commemorating modern industry and Mr. Padelford sculpted the panel depicting native industries. It is assumed that this work was undertaken under the direction of architect Harlan Thomas.

Morgan Padelford was born in Seattle and was the son of Frederick Morgan Padelford, the first chair of the University of Washington, Department of Literature and the Dean of the Graduate School from 1918 until 1942. The elder Padelford was a noted editor and author and one of the original founders and trustees of the Seattle Art Museum. Morgan Padelford was trained as a painter and sculptor. He was a pupil of John Butler and Charles Hopkinson in Boston and earned a M.A. from the University of Washington, School of Art in 1925. He was a member of Seattle Fine Arts Society by 1923; at the time of this project he would have been 22 years old and working on his master's degree. He subsequently studied with Andre L'Hote in Paris and established himself as an oil painter and watercolor artist. In 1929, he moved to Claremont, California where he taught at Scripps College for four years. During the summer of 1931 he studied with Hans Hoffman in Berkeley, California.

Three portraits of important University of Washington professors were executed by Morgan Padelford and are hung in Meany Hall; Edmond S. Meany, John D. Condon and Dr. F.M. Padelford, the artist's father. In 1935, work by Padelford began to be exhibited at the Fifteen Gallery in New York City; believed to be his exhibition outside of Seattle. He specialized in realist and representational portraiture of male and female subjects as well as a variety of Pacific and Southwest subjects described as having an abstract quality. He continued to reside in

southern California. From 1934 until 1958 he worked as a color consultant for various motion picture studios and specialized in Technicolor art direction. He is known to have worked as an art director on over forty film productions, including: *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938); *The Jolson Story* (1946); *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949); and, *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* (1954). He died in Pasadena.

Unfortunately biographical information about Miss Stumer has not been discovered. It is assumed that she was a fellow undergraduate or graduate student at the University of Washington.

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The features of the Landmark to be preserved include:

The exterior of the building.

Issued: March 14, 2011

Karen Gordon
City Historic Preservation Officer

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